

YOGA

Year 5 Issue 1

January 2016

Membership postage: Rs. 100



Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar, India



Hari Om

YOGA is compiled, composed and published by the sannyasin disciples of Swami Satyananda Saraswati for the benefit of all people who seek health, happiness and enlightenment. It contains information about the activities of Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati, Yoga Publications Trust and Yoga Research Fellowship.

Editor: Swami Shaktimitrananda Saraswati

Assistant Editor: Swami Yogatirthananda Saraswati

YOGA is a monthly magazine. Late subscriptions include issues from January to December.

Published by Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar – 811201.

Printed at Thomson Press India Ltd., Haryana – 121007

© Bihar School of Yoga 2016

Membership is held on a yearly basis. Please send your requests for application and all correspondence to:

Bihar School of Yoga
Ganga Darshan
Fort, Munger, 811201
Bihar, India

✉ A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be sent along with enquiries to ensure a response to your request

Total no. of pages: 62 (including cover pages)

Front cover: Bal Yoga Diwas 2015

Plates: 1: Sri Swami Sivananda;
2: Sri Swami Satyananda, Munger, 1968;
3: Sri Swami Satyananda, Rikhia, 2008;
4: Swami Niranjanananda, 1990;
5: Swami Niranjanananda, 2003;
6–7: Bal Yoga Diwas 2015;
8: Sri Swami Satyananda, Rikhia, 2006



GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

OBSTACLES TO SADHANA Song of Avidity

Avidity, cupidity, stupidity,
Audacity, turbidity, instability,
Angularity, eccentricity, irritability.
These are the obstacles to samadhi.
These are the impurities of the mind.
Avidity is covetousness or greed.

Cupidity is lust or passion.
Stupidity is delusion or infatuation.
Audacity is arrogance or impertinence.

Turbidity is confusion of mind.
Instability is wandering of the mind.
Angularity is a form of vanity.
Eccentricity is slavery to whims and fancies.
Irritability is anger in all its forms.

Remove these impurities
through the opposite virtues.
Avidity through practice of generosity;
Cupidity through practice of purity;
Instability through trataka and pranayama,
upasana and japa;
Angularity through practice of humility;
Eccentricity through practice of right conduct;
Irritability through practice of patience, forbearance;
You will enter into samadhi and attain kaivalya.

—Swami Sivananda

Published and printed by Swami Gyanbhikshu Saraswati on behalf of Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger – 811201, Bihar

Printed at Thomson Press India (Ltd), 18/35 Milestone, Delhi Mathura Rd., Faridabad, Haryana.

Owned by Bihar School of Yoga **Editor:** Swami Shaktimitrananda Saraswati

YOGA

Year 5 Issue 1 · January 2016
(54th year of publication)

Contents

- 4 The Essence of Yoga
- 6 Some Good Advice to Children
- 9 BYMM: A Children's Movement
- 13 Thank You, Swamiji
- 16 Connecting with Happiness
- 17 Traditions of Yoga Education
- 21 Establishing the Gurukul System of Education at Rikhiapeth
- 26 Gurukul Culture
- 35 Some Preliminary Ideas for Research into Attention
- 41 A Gurukul System of Education
- 45 A Lot To Learn
- 47 Parents Are Facilitators Only
- 50 Treasure of Learning
- 53 Karate
- 55 Yoga Chakra - the Second Initiation
- 57 The Beginning of Spiritual Life

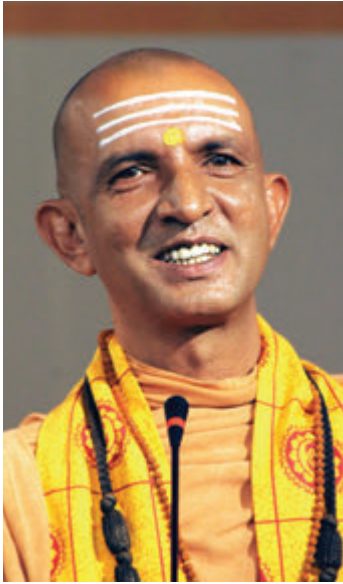


The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

The Essence of Yoga

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The mind is influenced by six expressions: *kama*, passion and desire is one, and everybody has desires; *krodha*, aggression and anger; *lobha*, greed; *moha*, infatuation – all these are in everyone; so is *mada*, ego or pride; and *matsarya*, jealousy, which also exists in everyone. These six traits define the behaviour of the mind in everybody's life. People speak of tension, stress and anxiety, and they try to deal with these, but they are not dealing with the cause of tension, stress and anxiety.

It is just as in medicine: if people have hypertension, they take a tablet to bring down the hypertension, however, they do not treat the cause of hypertension. For diabetes they take tablets or insulin injections to increase the output of insulin, yet there is no treatment to rectify the imbalance, for the body to again produce insulin. This is where yoga becomes most effective, for it allows the body to regain its health.

The same applies to the mind. When we speak of stress and tension, where are they arising from? When our desires are unfulfilled, that is a cause of stress. We relate stress to either work, family or the social environment or situation, yet they are only trigger points for bringing out these traits of the mind.

Dissatisfaction comes when desires or expectations are not fulfilled; becomes the cause of stress. Dissatisfaction comes when we are not able to manage our aggression and that

becomes the cause of anxiety and tension. Therefore, when we are looking at the root cause of stress and tension, we discover that they emanate from one of the six tendencies or behaviours of the mind.

When we teach yoga, whether to adults or to children, our approach is not only physical; it also allows them to become self-observant, to recognize their reactions and responses, and to manage their uncontrolled and unguided reactions and responses in a better manner. Once that happens, they become free from the direct effect and influence of these mental behaviours and discover their own peace and creativity.

It is not the physical posture which is changing the human nature; it is not the mental practice which is changing the human nature; it is becoming aware of the environment and how one responds to different situations in life. The essence of yoga lies in giving one the ability to respond in an appropriate, harmonious, constructive and positive manner even in a destructive and deteriorating situation.

– 6 June 2014, Kathmandu, Nepal



Some Good Advice to Children

From the teachings of Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Education is the root. Culture is the flower. Wisdom is the fruit.

Be neat and clean

Cleanliness is next to godliness. Cleanliness makes you smart and active. If you are clean you will be healthy. Be clean in thought, word and action also.

Keep your room very clean. Remove all rubbish, dust and waste-paper. If you are clean, your teachers will like you. All will like you. You will have a charming personality. Everybody hates a dirty man.

Adapt yourself

Develop adaptability and accommodate yourself with everybody. Then only can you win the hearts of all and attain

success in life. If you want to adapt yourself with all you must be humble and loving.

Arrogance, conceit and rudeness stand in the way of developing adaptability. Therefore, be gentle, soft, humble and simple. Obey elders and give up obstinacy. If you possess adaptability all will love you.

Watch your speech

Save your lips from slip. Watch every word when you speak. Never speak ill of anyone. Do not exaggerate but be true and accurate in your speech. Control your speech carefully. Talk little and with measured words. Give up your talkative nature.

Before speaking think carefully whether what you are going to speak is true, kind and helpful. If it is not, do not speak. Mind your own business and do not interfere with the affairs of others.

If you hear a scandal about another person, do not repeat it to others. Never wish to appear clever. Learn the virtue of silence and do not give your opinion if no one has asked you to give it. If you observe the above rules you will be peaceful and happy. People will respect and admire you.

Have faith in God

Have faith in God, in the holy scriptures and the words of great people. Have faith in your own self, in the grace of the Lord and in the power of His Name.

Faith can move mountains. Faith can work wonders. Strengthen the faith if it is flickering, by contact with sages and devotees and by study of holy books. Open your heart to God and become as simple as a child.

Service is worship

Serve the poor, the sick, your parents, teachers and friends. Service is worship of God. Service of the poor and service of parents is service of God. Service will purify your heart and give immense joy.

Give water to thirsty persons. Help your class fellows and make them understand what you have learnt. Help the blind in crossing the street.

Help your mother in the kitchen. Bring water from the neighbouring well, tank or river. Go to the bazaar to buy vegetables and fruits.

Go to the hospital and bring medicine for your neighbours. Sweep the house and clean the vessels. Distribute bread to the poor people, cows, birds, before you take your food. Learn first-aid. Remove the thorns, glass-pieces and big stones from the road. Do not leave any work half-finished.

Become a hero

Do not be timid. Be bold, cheerful and courageous. Walk like a lion. Talk boldly and remove shyness. Be ever active. Take care of your health and be strong, healthy and fiery.

Whenever you make up your mind to do a certain work do it with all your heart and soul. Finish it and do not leave it half-done. When you take a book for study, finish it. Service and sacrifice must be your motto. Lead an exemplary life.



There is turmoil throughout the world today. You can do nothing to eliminate it. Take care of your future generation.

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati

BYMM: A Children's Movement

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



One day in 1995, seven children from the Munger town came up to me and said, "Swamiji, there is going to be a yoga championship in Chandigarh and we want to go there." I said, "Go ahead." One week later these children came back and said, "Swamiji, our parents could not organize our journey, we have had to cancel our program." I told them, "If you had gone for the competition, you might have simply received a document, a piece of paper saying that you participated in the yoga competition. You might have even received a document saying that you excelled in yoga practice. But where would that have got you? Why don't you instead create an organization where grown-ups don't give certificates to you, but you give certificates to grown ups instead?" This is how the seed of Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal (BYMM) or Children's Yoga Fellowship was planted in 1995.

These children are not only devoted to or practising yoga, they are fully trained and well-versed in yoga. This is a movement which is managed by children, for children and created by children, all in the age group of 10–14.

The mandate given to them incorporates three principles: *samskara*, appropriate performance in life, *swavalamban*, independent effort, and *sanskriti prem*, love for culture. By receiving good *samskaras*, they are able to live a good life. *Swavalamban* means being like the river that finds its own path – not being dependent on anyone but possessing the ability to stand on one’s own feet and being happy. The third aim, *sanskriti prem*, refers to the spirituality-based culture of this country. To love and identify with this culture is an aim given to these children.

Sanskriti has been defined as *samyak kritena iti sanskriti*. When every behaviour and action in life is *samyak*, balanced, then this balance is called *sanskriti*. The BYMM children associate with these three aims in life. Yoga is something they learn naturally, as part of their play, but when they go out in the world they carry these three acquisitions with them.

The children receive their training through a four-year syllabus. It is a progressive course in which the last stage of training is that of a yoga teacher. So at the age of fourteen they are qualified yoga teachers with four years of experience. For one year they have to be yoga demonstrators. They are introduced to yoga practices and learn *asana* and *pranayama* along with the theory associated with the practices so they have some idea of what yoga postures can do to the body.

In the second year, they are taken to another level and become yoga instructors. As yoga instructors they are taught the intermediate group of practices along with more theory. At this level they also learn yogic games, which help improve their awareness, concentration, attention span, creativity and memory. In the third year they are promoted to yoga propagators and are trained for one year in advanced yoga techniques.



When the children cross the age of 14, they can join another children's organization – Children's Youth Yoga Fellowship, Bal Yuva Yoga Mitra Mandal. There is a third organization – Youth Yoga Fellowship, Yuva Yoga Mitra Mandal, for those above 18.

Each organization has a different function. In the Children's Yoga Fellowship we train the children in yogic principles, theory and practice, teach them how to take classes and practise yoga, and give them some exposure outside in conducting classes in schools at various locations. During summer holidays, BYMM conducts a massive five-day yoga training program for about 6,000 to 7,000 children. They manage this entire program; Bihar School of Yoga has no role to play in that.

The members of the second group, Children's Youth Yoga Fellowship, between the ages of 14 and 18, are sent out to different cities to help organize seminars, programs and conventions, and to conduct classes on a short-term basis of 15 days or one month. The members of the Youth Yoga Fellowship are given training to go to rural areas, to calamity affected areas, and work for the development there, whether it is service, relief or any other work.

The children come to the ashram every weekend and spend the whole day at the ashram. Besides yoga, they also learn music, self-defence, chanting, painting, music, literature, languages and scriptures, and they are exposed to different levels of yogic culture. Over a period of three years, with continuous association with the ashram, they develop into children with special qualities. They develop immense self-confidence and can do anything under the sun.

I have found that these children who have adopted yoga are exceptional. Their brain, their mind, performance, comprehension, memory and creativity is blooming. When yoga becomes a part of children's life, it comes alive in them. They express yoga naturally whereas we have to think, 'How would a yogi behave under these circumstances?' With their yogic background, these children can change the world. Where we have failed, they will succeed. Therefore, I call the Children's Yoga Fellowship the crowning glory of the Satyananda Yoga tradition for it also reflects care and consideration for the future of the earth, civilization and humanity.

Swami Sivananda used to say that the mind of children is as sensitive as the microphone of a tape recorder. It can pick up everything from the environment. Children are, by nature, intuitive. The intuitive faculty is active until the age of eight. When intelligence kicks in, when they go to school and learn a, b, c, d and math, the education process overshadows the intuitive nature and stimulates the intellect. However, the intuitive receptivity can be stretched until the age of fourteen with the practices of yoga. After fourteen when other hormones kick in, they need another set of yoga practice, but by then they already have a good foundation of asana, pranayama, the meditative and mantra components of yoga. They develop a deep understanding of things which one would consider impossible for a child. This is how we teach yoga to children.

Thank You, Swamiji

On behalf of all of us, from the bottom of our hearts, from every muscle and every cell, from all the tattwas, Swamiji, we would like to thank you for this course. No words can express the gratitude we feel. How privileged and fortunate we are to have been given this new vision and experience of yoga. However, we also feel that a great responsibility has been entrusted to us, to connect with vidya and to protect the tradition of yoga and keep it pure.



We came with no expectations, yet none of us could believe or even imagine that you would take all the classes. Every moment is a moment that we will continue to cherish. Thank you Swamiji, for sharing your light, your inspiration, your experience, your wisdom, your smiles and happiness with us.

Nobody can say that Satyananda Yoga is a soft yoga. We have all felt muscles that we didn't know we had and layers and layers of muscles. We came a little floppy here and there, but we leave fit, trim and firm. I think for the first time we have really experienced the practices and understood the importance of the sequence. It has been an incredible experience and a new discovery. Not only that, but we also feel clean from top to bottom, and inside-out. Many people have told me that they feel ten or twenty years younger. It has been an experience of deep cleansing and rejuvenation.

The new vision of yoga that you have given us with the Yoga Chakra suddenly puts all the pieces of the puzzle in



their right places and has given us the complete picture. Our understanding of yoga has been very fragmented and limited, but you have now given us the map and a new understanding. We feel that every day of this course a new door has been opened up to us.

Not only have you given us the complete map of the tradition of yoga and the connection with vidya but the practical and beautiful tools to continue to work on ourselves and make yoga a living experience. We have to continue to work hard, no doubt, but you have shown us that it is possible to become better human beings, positive, creative and happy, and to share that with the world to make the world a better place.

We have been given the zeal, the inspiration and the determination to continue to work for yoga with sincerity, commitment and seriousness, and to continue to apply the yogic principles in our life.

I have left the Tattwa Shuddhi 2 classes to the last because we are still trying to digest this absolutely, incredibly beautiful technique shown to us in its clarity, simplicity and profound depth. It has given us the actual experience of what has been

until now an abstract philosophical concept. It has made the bridge between the material experience and connection, and the spiritual experience and connection.

To do the Tattwa Shuddhi 2 – or the introduction to Tattwa Shuddhi 2 – and at the same read the book *Yoga Chakra 2* was beautiful and made another bridge between spiritual experience and expression in life, in our interactions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour.

The idea of the seven levels of purification is another beautiful idea which we have received during the Yoga Chakra course, and we will all start on the first level by cleaning our houses, outside and inside and continue until we shine.

Again thank you, Swamiji. No thanks can truly express the gratitude that we feel. We will show our gratefulness by protecting this precious gift we have been given. We will continue to work on ourselves and protect the tradition with sincerity, commitment and seriousness. We leave this course with our hearts filled with happiness and big smiles; and we are all looking forward to coming back for our next Progressive Training in 2018. From the depths of our hearts, thank you, Swamiji.

– Swami Maitreyi, Colombia



Connecting with Happiness

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The Progressive Training is imparted with the intention to transmit the vidya of yoga by imbibing the teachings of Swami Sivananda Saraswati of Rishikesh and Swami Satyananda of Munger. This training is given to encourage a deeper experience of yoga, to develop clear independent thought, speech and action and to connect with happiness and creative and positive expressions in life.

Manah Prasad or being happy is the first yama to cultivate as outlined in *Hatharatnavalli*. Cultivation of this yama will allow the aspirant to connect with the good in life, to develop the positive, and to establish the qualities of dharma and *santosh*a or contentment in life.

– 30 October 2015, Ganga Darshan, Munger

Traditions of Yoga Education

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

In India, the ancient civilization had its birth, blossoming and preservation in the forest. This historical fact has been aptly illustrated in the verses of the *Yajurveda* (26/15) which refer to the ancient seers engaged in the acquisition of knowledge in the heart of forests, on the hill tops, in the caves around the river banks, dwelling in their hermitages surrounded by the beauty of nature.

Forest - cradle of civilization

This says Buddha, the great yogin, to his disciples: "Have you never heard it said by wanderers who were

vulnerable, aged, your teachers and the teachers of your teachers about the ancient Arahants, Buddhas, and so forth who sought the remote and lonely recesses of the forest, where noise, where sound hardly is, where the breezes from the pastures blow, yet which were safely hidden from the eyes of men, meet for self-communion, even as I (Buddha) do now?" (*Digha Nikaya III. 54*)

In the words of poet Tagore, "Thus in India, it was in the forests that our civilization had its birth. It was surrounded by the vast life of nature, was fed and clothed by her, and had the closest and most constant intercourse with her in varying aspects." (*Sadhana*, p 4)



Ashrams as universities

In the past, those who wanted to realize or had already realized the aim and end, their solitary abodes, even in the remotest forest, gathered the seekers of knowledge. The disciples included the rich and poor, the king and the beggar, the old and young, both men and women from all levels of society who had left their distant homes, their mundane possessions and all their earthly attachments in search of truth. The modest huts, the solitary forest homes, caves carved in rocks – often inaccessible as a challenge to the devout – where in the master dwelt, served as the medium of knowledge, more so of yoga, that quenched the thirst of many students, and thus the traditional heritage of Indian culture was handed down from generation to generation.

These unadorned hermitages – except for the vast beauty of nature around – referred to as ashrams had no pomp such as the modern universities display. The teachers taught not because they were paid but because they considered it their duty to impart their knowledge to the deserving, and the students were accepted not because they subscribed their fees in kind but because they were found fit for such studies. Alike, the teachers, even the students were an example in themselves for the very life they preached and pursued, and the conglomeration of students gathered there not for acquiring knowledge that was to bring their daily bread but to know the reality and to live that reality. From all available cultural records, it is evident that in ancient India, both the masters and the disciples valued not the quantity but the quality of knowledge.

Indian culture was, and to some extent still is, essentially esoteric and available only to earnest students and imparted solely through the medium of personal contact with the teachers. The little that is known through its esoteric metaphysical systems – especially in the case of yoga – does not represent even a fraction of all that has to be intrinsically lived. The texts of various systems of philosophy serve merely as indices

and therefore are void of essential details of technique meant for the practical students. For this reason, the real centres of learning were the hermitages where the teachers well-versed in practical details lived the very knowledge they preached and guided the students in their respective training courses.

Yoga monasteries

Especially in so far as the yoga training is concerned, the available texts prove to be of very little value; most of the practices remain secret knowledge with the teachers and these have therefore been confined generally amongst the circle of yogins who would communicate the actual technique only to the most deserving pupils. The genuine yogins living in the solitude of mountains were hardly accessible, and there are today only a very few who would be eager to learn yoga under the conditions which may be imposed upon them. Even in ancient India, the yoga monasteries were few and far apart, and the training in the technique of yoga, for all practical purposes, became extremely difficult.

Sporadic efforts to save yoga from such an enigmatic existence by investigations into the subtleties of its metaphysics and theories have won a measure of success in keeping alive certain scholastic interest in the subject, but the vital technique for practice remained and still remains as obscure and elusive as ever. The present monasteries have lost their antiquated dignity and vigour and what is taught there is of doubtful origin and value. The recent spurt of the so-called yogashramas and centres of health and physical training patronized by the unwary has caused a further slump in the true perspective – from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Ancient and modern methods of instruction

Furthermore, the contrast between hermitages and modern universities as centres of learning is also very vital, for the latter fail to supply the necessary environments which contribute to the way of life in conformity with the teachings, under

constant supervision and contract of the teachers. As a result, there is much barren superfluity of academic and mechanized knowledge, which sticks to students as an objective additive of decoration, without any harmony being established between the basic understanding of life and habituation to such a living. This duplicity in the acquisition of knowledge and its actual practice in day-to-day life is responsible for much that is hypocritical, unpleasant and suicidal.

The institution of yoga education in ancient India had a different value, was applied differently and had therefore a different method of imparting it. The significance of masters and their abodes of learning could be appreciated only by those who realize the difference between theory and practices, between ornamental and applied knowledge, and between mechanized education and an integrated way of life. To all forms of learning which belong to the former category, and what is generally available at the modern university level, yoga supplements the latter. The hermitages represent the integral quality, which moulds the personality, while the universities impart quantitative training to the masses. What is needed in the changed context of the world at present is the harmonious synthesis of what is best in each.

– Printed in YOGA Vol. 10, No. 8, August 1972



Establishing the Gurukul System of Education at Rikhiapeeth

From Yoga Education for Children, Volume Two, Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

When I arrived with Swami Satyananda at Rikhia, an obscure village in Jharkhand, I felt as if I was slipping back into the 16th century. You could not get more backward than that; there was simply no trace of the 20th century, no roads, no electricity, no phones, no newspapers, no cars, no busy streets, no hospitals, a few dilapidated schools looking desolate with only a few ragged unkempt children, wearing torn and tattered clothing.



That was the Rikhia we entered on 21st September 1989. Swami Satyananda had chosen this place for his life of seclusion according to a mandate he had received while performing austerities at the jyotirlingam of Shiva at Tryambakeshwar near Mumbai. Soon after he arrived, Sri Swamiji plunged into sadhana and undertook the sankalpa of performing many arduous practices such as panchagni and mantra anushthana.

It was during this time that our neighbours began knocking on our door for help. They were hungry, they needed medicines, shelter and clothing. The very basics that we take so much for granted were unavailable to them. We started helping them in whatever way we could and help started pouring in. Our

work began in full swing when in 1995, Swami Satyananda, accepting it as the will of God, gave us the green signal to start this work in earnest in an organized and systematic manner, with the attitude of an *aradhana*, or worship of God in living form.

Today, when you see the same place and the people, especially the children, you may not believe the condition they were in hardly ten years ago. They would qualify perfectly for a before and after advertisement, if you know what I mean!

How did it all happen? The very same children, who at that time did not have the confidence to look you in the eye and answer a simple question like “What is your name?” are today at the helm of the Rikhia ashram, speaking wonderful English, designing the ashram calendars, conducting all its multifarious programs, singing soul stirring kirtans, conducting yajnas with perfect intonation of Sanskrit mantras which would make even a pandit sit up and listen.

When I look back to the time when a young village girl knocked on our door and shyly asked to learn English and we hesitantly started to teach her ‘abc’, I am amazed to see how the small seed sown on that day has flourished into this giant tree of over 1,500 children that are ever on the increase. Mind you, these children come from impoverished homes. They are the unfortunate, neglects of society, who have been condemned to a life worse than the animals that affluent members of society rear as pets in their homes. They do not have even the basic amenities that a child needs like a toothbrush and toothpaste, soap, comb and towel, or even a toilet where they can bathe in privacy. This, to my mind, is the main achievement of Rikhia because these children have literally risen out of the doldrums.

Rikhia was an experiment, based on the philosophy of Swami Satyananda, that education is a process of unfoldment from within, not something you borrow from outside, which becomes possible when the child is exposed to a positive environment and receives trust, encouragement, recognition, responsibility and love, as in a gurukul system of education.



Sri Swamiji always says that when you contribute to the growth of an otherwise useless person and make him capable, that is a big achievement and accomplishment. Anyone can get things done by trained professionals, but then what is your contribution in that? Instead, if you make a person who is otherwise a total reject into someone useful, that is a big service you have done for him.

With these words in mind we took up the challenge at Rikhia. We started with the girls because they were the most neglected in the community. The parents did not even consider it necessary to send them to school or educate them. These little girls were doomed to a life of doing odd jobs at homes which perhaps no one else cared to do. In other words, they were considered good for nothing or a burden on the family.

With his wonderful ways, Swami Satyananda changed all that. He gave them the name 'kanya', which immediately exalted their position in the minds of everyone as kanya worship is an integral part of Indian society, so much so that every Indian rich or poor, educated or illiterate, has utmost faith in the ritual of kanya pooja. To my mind that worked wonders for them, for some deep-rooted change began to occur just by this recognition given to them.

The method we used was first of all to allow them their own free space without making any demands on them to come

regularly. In other words, they should want to come out of their own sweet will. Then arose the question of what we should teach them.

Yoga was the natural option as we were all trained yoga teachers and we all knew how beneficial yoga would be for their expansion of mind. But then we decided to ask them what they wanted to learn, instead of imposing our choices on them. Imagine our surprise when they said English! Those ragged, snotty-nosed kids, who could not even speak their own mother tongue properly, wanted to learn the most sophisticated language of our age.

So the English lessons started. Sometimes they came, sometimes they didn't. But we did not react to that. One fine morning when the kids had not turned up, some of us sannyasins were chanting the morning prayers in Sanskrit, followed by kirtan, when a few of them turned up and asked to join in. They liked it so much that they began to come regularly and soon learnt all the chants and kirtans effortlessly.

Gradually, we noticed a marked change in their confidence levels. They responded better, they looked brighter, they moved with ease, grace and poise. They became more and more enthusiastic about all their activities and thus learnt quicker. The chanting of mantras had worked wonders for expanding the frontiers of their mind, making them more receptive to the unfoldment of knowledge.

After all, expansion of mind is that phenomenon which opens all the unseen locks of the mind that prevent the removal of ignorance. This was taking place in these children through the constant chanting of Sanskrit mantras. Sanskrit is a phonetic language based purely on sound frequency. In that respect, it differs from other languages which have developed for the purpose of communication.

Through the medium of sound, Sanskrit activates energy centres located in the mouth, throat, nasal tract, epiglottis and tongue, which are directly linked to higher centres in the brain. To achieve this, the only requirement is that the pronunciation

should be perfect and the chanting should be regular. They fulfilled both these conditions and we can see the results.

The chanting of mantras and kirtan is an integral part of nada yoga which utilizes *dhvani*, or sound, to awaken the inner potential. Along with nada yoga, we introduced them to the ritual of yajna, which is a fire ceremony performed with the chanting of mantras. These simple methods have worked wonders for them.

Today the attendance of girls in the nearby school is one hundred percent and they carry away all the prizes for distinction in all subjects. With this marked improvement in the kanyas, we then decided to include the little boys as well or else the girls of Rikhia would soon begin to overshadow them. Swami Satyananda named them 'batuks', as the batuk too plays an important role in the kanya worship and this has created a wonderful competitive spirit between them.

Today their minds have opened up to a whole new world out there. They can hope, aspire, dream and even become what they dream to be. Previously, they were like the proverbial frog in the well that could not even imagine a world beyond the walls of the well where he was born, lived and died. All this was possible only because a very special person, Swami Satyananda Saraswati, happened to step into their lives one fine afternoon in 1989 and started the establishment of a gurukul system of education.



Gurukul Culture

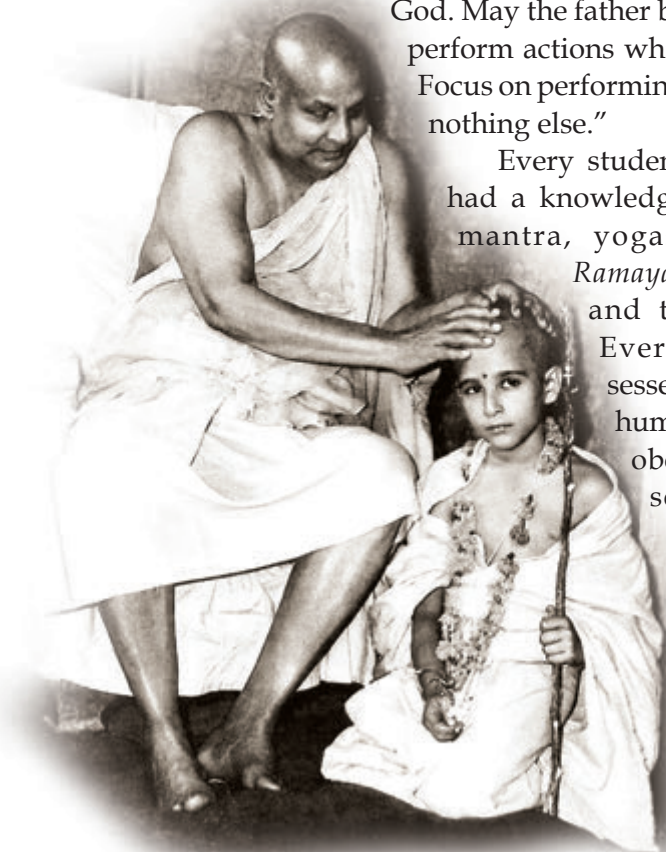
Swami Sivananda Saraswati

There is a wide gulf when comparing the present education system with the ancient gurukul system. When students finished their course of study, the rishis would give further instructions:

“Speak the truth. Do your duty. Do not swerve from the truth. Maintain your welfare and prosperity. Uphold the learning and teachings of the Vedas. May the mother be your God. May the father be your God. Only perform actions which are blameless. Focus on performing good works and nothing else.”

Every student in the gurukul had a knowledge of pranayama, mantra, yogasana, the *Gita*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and the Upanishads.

Every student possessed the qualities of humility, self-restraint, obedience, spirit of service and self-sacrifice, a courteous nature and last but not least a desire for acquiring *atmajnana*, knowledge of the Self. This was the predominant feature of the ancient culture.



















Some Preliminary Ideas for Research into Attention

From Yoga Research Publication: Volume One, (Micheline Flak) Swami Yogabhakti Saraswati PhD (Sorbonne), Founder and President of RYE

ABSTRACT: An experienced educator and yoga practitioner sets out the definitive aspects of attention and how to train this often elusive quality with a variety of yoga techniques. She stresses the concept of inner attention as well as outer attention and the necessity of research to correlate the yogic practices with different categories of attention already examined neurophysiologically.



Psychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists: neurophysiologists have erred together in their undue emphasis on the conscious components of mentation. This has led the educator into neglecting the preconscious instrument of learning, which is the effective instrument of recording, processing and of creating.

—L.S. Kubie¹

Introduction

Attention, turning the mind, or an aspect of it, towards something is in great demand in modern life. Yet most find attention, in the form of one-pointed concentration, difficult to attain. This is largely due to the manifold distractions of and decisions necessitated by our democratic, consumer-oriented society. As Thoreau pointed out in *Walden*, “Our life is frittered

away in detail' – a point he attempted to prove by rebelliously existing for a few summers with the bare necessities, including morning readings of the *Bhagavad Gita*, by a Concord pond. Yet, as I will attempt to show in this paper, there are many different aspects to attention and many different ways to train its effectiveness. In particular, it may no longer be valid, in an educational or meditative setting, to equate effective attention with one-pointed concentration.

Splitting of the attention

In his classic chapter on attention in *Principles of Psychology* (1890) William James proposed that, "The practical and theoretical life of whole species, as well as of individual beings, results from the selection which the habitual direction of their attention involves . . . each of us literally chooses by his (or her) way of attending to things what sort of a universe he (or she) shall appear to inhabit."²

As Davidson and Coleman point out, the major implication of this is that our habitual pattern of attention may be supposed, over time, to influence the content of our mind and emotions and thence our behaviour and experience.³ The concert musician who, by repetitive, attentive practice, trains his or her fingers to play a certain scale is, by this reinforcing of a particular, sequential pattern of proprioceptive impulses, developing specific groups of neuronal synapses in areas of the central nervous system such as the basal ganglia and cerebellum. Attention thus changes the physical structure of the brain to create an engram or program of activity which can initiate an extremely complex series of movements without the need for conscious guidance via neuronal pathways from the motor cortex.⁴ Similarly, the person suffering from chronic 'malattention' may develop changes in neural structure, measurable on an electroencephalogram, that correlate with poor work performance and impaired social relationships.

In my work with Research on Yoga in Education (RYE), I have increasingly become aware that many modern behaviour



patterns are leading to a split of attention amongst the young. Listening to walkman radios while reading and/or watching television, and zapping (rapid switching of television channels by remote control) are often bemoaned as factors in an apparent degeneration of youthful faculties and hence of national productivity and character. Indeed such behaviour seems a direct contradiction of the classical ideas we have about the management of our intellect. That is, attention, to be effective should be focused on one thing at a time. Such problems have stimulated my interest in attention and in the development of methods for its training.

The conversion of split into double or triple attention

Many famous people who lead enormously productive lives had developed that capacity to direct their attention to more than one thing at a time. Napoleon, for example, was reputedly able to dictate sentences for four different letters, returning to complete each with perfect recollection of its contents. Such anecdotes lead me to consider whether children and adults might be able to train their habituated split attention into effective dual or triple attention.

One technique I have used is to get students to listen to a story while working at multiplication. Afterwards the level of effective double attention is checked by verifying whether the story can be retold correctly and that the mathematics is accurate. Another practice involves rows of students behind each other with readers at the end of each line. The readers recite different articles. The first stage in training the attention is to listen to one person only. The second is to try and listen to both at the same time. The third stage is to try and give an account of the context of both articles. It is like having a dialogue with someone in a restaurant, and later relating the conversation at the next table.

Peripheral or non-focused attention

Other existing methods of education attempt to train attention to effectiveness without utilizing the one-pointed concentration that modern human beings find so difficult. The Lozanov method of learning, especially of languages, (called Suggestopaedia) develops peripheral or non-focused attention. The student is desensitized to the stress normally associated with one-pointed concentration. It is a complex method and difficult to describe fully here. In a related method, 'Superlearning', a list for memorization is read with the student mentally repeating each word during breath retention, then exhaling and inhaling between repetitions. Thereafter certain types of Baroque music are played (with sixty beats per minute, e.g. Pachelbel's 'Canon') while the text is again read. Finally, retention is tested by an attempt at mental repetition. This method also works on the principle that when the mind is relaxed more information will be retained, even without one-pointed concentration.

Attention in relation to the inner and outer world

So far, I have discussed attention in relation to the external world, yet the concept is equally important in relation to our inner state. Our attention on personal thought processes and emotions ultimately provides the secure basis of self-

understanding and strength from which effective social interaction can take place.

Shapiro has written of 'three broad general groupings of attentional strategies in meditation: a focus on the field' (mindfulness meditation like Zen's shikan-taza); 'a focus on a specific object within the field' (the classical, one-pointed concentration of raja yoga); 'and a shifting back and forth between the two', (vipassana and transcendental meditation).⁵



Citing Pribam's work on neuropsychology⁶ Shapiro describes brain attentional mechanisms as being like a camera: one type involving a focus similar to a wide angled lens – a broad, sweeping awareness taking in the entire field (mindfulness meditation); the second type is like a zoom lens – a specific focusing on a restricted segment of a field.

Such a definition of meditation appears to me to unnecessarily exclude the concept of double or triple attention – the focusing on more than one object within a field. During the meditation technique of ajapa japa, for example, the yogi is trained to be aware simultaneously of posture, of the psychic passage between navel and throat, of the breath passing up and down this passage, of the mantra *So Ham* and of any thoughts arising during the process. Likewise, highly advanced meditation states appear to involve double attention in an even more subtle sense. In *nirvikalpa samadhi* the yogi is simultaneously aware of the Supreme Reality, as it is often called, and the external material reality. In gross neurophysiological terms this would be equivalent to the coexistence of EEG delta waves, characteristic of deep sleep, with the beta waves of normal waking consciousness.



References

- ¹ Kubie, L.S., 1967, "Research in protecting preconscious functions in education", in Jones, R.M., ed., *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, Harper Torch Books, New York, p 78.
- ² James, W., 1950, *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 1, Dover, New York.
- ³ Davidson, R.J., Goleman, D.J., 1984, "The role of attention in meditation and hypnosis: a psychobiological perspective on transformations of consciousness", in Shapiro, D.R., Walsh, R.N., eds., *Meditation: Classic and Contemporary Perspectives*, Aldin, New York, pp. 594-615.
- ⁴ Guyton, A.C., 1981. *Textbook of Medical Physiology*, 6th ed., Phil. WB Saunders.
- ⁵ Shapiro, D.H., "Overview: Clinical and psychological comparison of meditation with other self control strategies".
- ⁶ Pribram, K., 1971, *Languages of the Brain: Experimental paradoxes and principles in neuropsychology*, N.J. Prentice Hall.

(To be continued in the next issue of YOGA)

A Gurukul System of Education

From Yoga Education for Children, Volume Two, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati (Extract)

In an ashram the tradition of the *gurukul*, the teacher's family, is where there is an environment and a lifestyle conducive to spiritual growth; where the vision and spirit of the masters of a tradition is kept alive. It is an environment which is spiritual and where the vision of the guru can unfold. The gurukul at Ganga Darshan, Munger, represents a tradition of visionaries: Swami Sivananda, who foresaw the need of yoga as a lifestyle for the future and Swami Satyananda, who structured the vision of his guru, the philosophy, practices, applications and lifestyle into a very practical and scientific system called Bihar Yoga or Satyananda Yoga. It is through this system of yoga that Swami Satyananda developed the techniques through which we can harmonize and improve the efficiency of our head, heart and hands – intellect, emotions and actions.



Developing the whole personality

Yoga in the gurukul system involves integration and development of the entire human personality, not only the body or mind. In the gurukul system of education there has to be a balance between *asanas*, or physical postures, *pranayama*, breath control, *pratyahara*, relaxation, and *dharana*, concentration.

Also one is given the task of experimenting with the *yamas*, or abstentions, and *niyamas*, observances, to experience those attitudes and perceptions and their role in one's life. Adherence to *yamas* and *niyamas* leads to an inner transformation. It helps you to connect with your own inner qualities and strengths. So the totality of *raja yoga* is lived by the student.

Synthesis of yogic experience

Swadhyaya, or self-study, one of the observances, is also part of the gurukul system of education and is a part of *jnana yoga*. *Bhakti yoga* in this system gives one the chance to be exposed to different tools to channel, transcend and sublimate the gross emotions. Of course, the *karma yoga* experience of performing *seva*, selfless actions, is an important part of the ashram routine. The gurukul environment and the ashram lifestyle helps one to experience yoga as it is meant to be experienced, to have a different understanding of yoga and a different understanding of life.

The mature mind

Yoga is a continuous process of development and cannot be learnt in a couple of years, but once you have practised, studied and understood yoga, you will find that your daily moments become filled with yogic awareness. Yoga is not only *asana* and *pranayama*, it is an attitude, an awareness of your interaction with life and the ability to ensure smooth passage through moments of difficulty. So, yoga is an ongoing process of education.

Education is not just an intellectual process or achievement. Rather, education plays a very vital part in the maturing of



the human mind and consciousness. Maturity of mind and consciousness is the aim of education and is reflected in the ability to apply in practice the knowledge that you have gained intellectually. Knowledge is one thing and application is another. Knowledge without application is merely an intellectual achievement, but when you begin to apply what you know, then the process of maturity of consciousness begins. When you are able to maintain your balance, harmony and peace in day-to-day situations, that is maturity of mind.

Where real education begins

The growth of an individual begins with positive interaction between the parent and the child. It is this period which is crucial and important for education. Today's society inspires violence; the toys we give our children are guns and water pistols. Psychologically, we are telling them "Express your violence!"

We are giving them the message that the only emotion to express is their anger and violence. If that is the state of our interaction with our children, then in the future we are going to see a lot of social disturbances and psychological imbalances, and society does not have any infrastructure to deal with such situations. It is happening even now with the rise in crime and decline in values.

Our concept of education has to change from classroom education to personal education. This shift has to be made. How do we do that? According to the yogic theories, real education, intuitive education and humanitarian education stops around the age of seven and after that academic education begins.

People like Micheline Flak (Swami Yogabhakti) and other thinkers are concerned with the academic school education after the age of seven, but we are concerned with the intuitive education which a child can imbibe only up to the age of seven. This education is imbibed through the family environment, the culture and society, and it is known as *samskara*, the programming of the human computer.

The mother is responsible for such education, but remember that if a seed is rotten, whatever grows from it will also be infirm, weak and rotten. We cannot provide our offspring with the right *samskaras*. Therefore, it is my request to all the mothers and mothers-to-be to make a conscious effort to gain *samskaras* in their nature, personality and life, to express these *samskaras* in the family environment, and to educate the children with those *samskaras*.



A Lot To Learn



Dear Editor,

The city of Guwahati sees innumerable religious programs being organized the year round. From 8th to 11th October at the Gaushala in Guwahati, the “Know Yourself” program organized under the auspices of the Bihar School of Yoga was the ideal one, the likes of which has never been seen in Guwahati before and I doubt will ever be seen in the future either.

The Paramacharya of the Bihar School of Yoga, Swami Niranajananda Saraswati, kept giving people something throughout the program while not taking anything from them. In such a huge program there was no show and pomp, no posturing or posing - just the simple propagation of yoga. There was neither entry fee nor any donation receipts. Each participant of every session received attractive T-shirts, angavastras, rudraksha malas or Shiva-Shakti yantras as they left the program. On the last day, while leaving the program,

each and every participant was gifted invaluable, informative books on behalf of the Bihar School of Yoga.

There were no officials on stage, no important leader or government representative either. No one was felicitated with flowers and shawls nor did any famous personality make speeches. Swamiji would make a simple unobtrusive entry and the program commenced with the ancient traditional Indian practices like bhajan, chanting of Mahamrityunjaya mantra and the thirty-two names of Durga.

As soon as Swamiji began his satsang, people automatically quietened down, listening to him in rapt attention with a discipline that came from within. There were no volunteers wearing big badges strutting about, there was no office set up at the venue and not a single receipt book or donation box to be seen anywhere. Everyone was welcomed without any discrimination between rich and poor, ordinary or important people. A wealthy industrialist and his driver or attendant received the same reception. Security guards, police on duty, people working on the electricity or sound system and in the marquee were received and welcomed equally. No one was seen showing off as they entered nor was anyone seen wearing expensive clothes to keep to a dress code.

Swami Niranjanananda's warm and loving manner inspired one to prostrate before him. Swamiji stated very clearly that in keeping with the instructions and directives of his guru, he was not in favour of making yoga a commercial enterprise. The devout might have made an offering if they so desired but he did not ask for anything, instead showered everyone with so much. Such an incredible program reminds one of the sannyasins of Satya Yuga, Treta Yuga and Dwapar Yuga. Local officials have a lot to learn from the organizing of such an event. Such ideal programs should receive a warm and hearty welcome every time!

– Sampat Mishra

Dainik Purvodaya, Wednesday, 15 October 2015, Guwahati

Parents Are Facilitators Only

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



People ask if, according to the law of karma, children carry the karmas of their parents. The answer is 'no'. You come into this life with good and bad karmas. You do not receive them from your family. What you receive from the family are good and bad samskaras. You are exposed to samskaras from your family, society, from your culture and religion. These samskaras can be good or bad. Karmas, however, are the traits of life that you come with and they are deep-rooted in the unconscious. Samskaras are not that deep-rooted and can be at the level of the subconscious, while karmas cannot. Therefore, the main difference is that you come with karmas and are exposed to samskaras in this material world.

Milestones on the journey

Karmas are milestones. If destiny is a journey, then karmas are the milestones. If you have to go from Munger to another city, the city is the destination. How do you know how far you have travelled on the road – ten miles, twenty miles, one hundred miles? These markers are the karmas. Once you overcome a karma, you cover a certain distance on the journey to your destination. Each one of you comes with your own set of karmas and destinies, whether you are a parent or a child.

A crooked parent can have a saintly child and a saintly parent can have a crooked child. It is not necessary that a saintly person will only have saintly children, or crooked parents will only have crooked children, for you are not giving anything. You are only giving the body and an opportunity for life to grow on this planet. Beyond that, everything else comes as a gift of God and nature, *prakriti*. It is the statement of the *Bhagavad Gita* (15:7):

*Mamaivasmsho jeevaloke jeevabhootah sanaatanah;
Manah shashthaaneendriyaani prakritisthaani karshati.*

An eternal portion of Myself having become a living soul in the world of life, draws to (itself) the (five) senses with the mind for the sixth, abiding in Nature.

Everyone lives their own destiny. Parents do not influence the destiny of a child. Superficially, they may think that they are able to guide, control and channel the direction of their child's life. However, there comes a time when the child becomes independent from the influences of the parents. At that moment, it is the destiny which is lived. The karma that the child has come with is lived.

No spiritual loans

Since we all have different destinies, there is no loan which is carried forward from father to son in spiritual life. That is

more of a social concept. It is a system of society, which has nothing to do with karma, with destiny and samskara. Social customs, thoughts and ideas are different to spiritual beliefs and thoughts. Social customs are made by people who are not necessarily spiritual.

It is incorrect to think that what happens in society is a reflection of a spiritual ideology. If society demands that children have to pay for the loan taken by their father, then that is the rule. In spiritual life, each one is living their own destiny and they have their own path to follow.

Parents are only facilitators for children to discover their own aspirations in life and to grow towards these aspirations. Beyond that is only an imposition of human society on how one should be, what one should do and how one should live one's life.

– 15 November 2015, Ganga Darshan, Munger



The main idea of karma is not one of punishment for past failures, mistakes and crimes, but that one may learn one's lesson and gain the soul qualities needed as quickly as possible, so that one may fulfill one's destiny, one's special place and work in the grand plan.

–Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Treasure of Learning

From Bhakti Yoga Sagar, Volume Seven, Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Today you will all receive prasad. There are notebooks in your schoolbag, a geometry set, pens and pencils. Your bag also contains a T-shirt and trousers, and one invisible thing – my feelings and blessings. You may not see that but the feeling of my heart is there.

In the twentieth sloka of *Neetishatak*, Bhartrihari states,

*Vidyanaam narasye roopamadhikam prachchhahnaguptam dhanam
Vidya bhogkari yashah sukhakari vidya gurunam guruh.
Vidya bandhujano videshgamane
Vidya paramdaivatam.*

Learning is man's abundant beauty, it is his hidden treasure. Learning is a source of enjoyment, fame and pleasure, learning is the super preceptor. While in a foreign country learning is your friend and guide. Learning is supreme fortune.

I have travelled in foreign countries. Swami Vivekananda travelled in foreign countries. We won the world by dint of our learning and knowledge. Learning, knowledge and wisdom are required to win the world. Therefore, you should take a keen interest in your studies and acquire knowledge to stand on your own feet. You should motivate your parents also to learn something. Devote more time to your studies.

Education comes first

I have to give the same message to the boys also. Avoid idle rambling, avoid the company of cigarette smokers, tobacco chewers and those youngsters who are fond of liquor. Maintain a respectful distance from those idlers who have no stake in life. If you have to fashion a decent future, you should take your career seriously. I am particularly addressing the young boys. The government has offered a number of concessions to the backward classes. You must try to avail yourselves of these concessions without resorting to underhand methods.

I give books and stationery to a number of boys and girls admitted to St Francis and Ramakrishna Mission Schools. I am working on many projects to promote education in this area. You must remember the feeling of my heart, which I have put into your bags with the reading and writing materials. Try not to forget it. You should always bear in mind that Swamiji wishes you to pursue your studies in the right spirit, earn something, serve society and then enter into family life. Entering into holy wedlock and producing children should be relegated to the last option. Marriage and children should never be your first priority. Try to remember that marriage and progeny should be your last priority. First is education, second is profession and third is reproduction - marriage and progeny.

The problem is that these children have ambitions, but their parents are ill-bred and ill-informed. They can't see beyond their noses. The village girls of this area tend domestic cattle, collect the cow dung in the early morning, graze the cattle and

goats and by the time they are eighteen or nineteen they are the mothers of two or three children. To beget a number of children was the necessity of the past, when our society was primitive and agriculture was the mainstay. Now the times have changed and children have ambitions. They talk among themselves of their dreams and ambitions. But their parents cannot see beyond begetting children. They don't know how to plan their families or how to make sacrifices for the well-being of their offspring.

There are many fathers who drink beyond their means and leave nothing for their wives and children. They say, "What will the children do after they have received higher education?" I asked one of the fathers to send his daughter to school. Quickly came the reply, "What will she do after getting an education? Will she do anything other than dealing with the cow dung?" This concept of education is very prevalent in society; it is not an insignificant concept.



To give is to share

This year I have involved the children in giving away prasada to the people gathered here, as a means of training. Children should learn how to give, how to share their food with others. Training in receiving is not essential because a child learns this in the mother's womb. So I don't give that training as children are born with it; they are trained graduates in that matter, past masters so to say. If children are trained in giving or sharing, they will learn how to give when they are grown up. I could have had the prasada distributed by any group of people, but I have involved the children in this work for their training. To give or share is an art. To give is to share.

– 17 December 2001, Rikhiapeeth

Karate

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

There is a rule at BYMM, the Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal. The rule is that girls practise karate and boys practise mantras. Karate will bring confidence, stamina and strength to girls, and mantra will make boys a little bit more quiet, a bit more harmonious and a bit more peaceful.

One day, the boys came to me and said, "Swamiji, you know the Munger boys are famous in Bihar for their strength of character, but here our sisters are stronger than we are. It is actually not good for our reputation, so can you include us in the karate classes?" I said, "All right, under one condition: do not treat karate as a martial art; rather, it is an art of gaining *sanyam*, control, over the body, mind and prana. It is an art of meditation."



Dynamic meditation

This particular technique of karate was developed by Buddha and his followers to defend and protect themselves. It is an ancient Indian tradition: *kara* means hand, still today *kar* means hand, and *hata* means to injure. *Kar* and *hata* together became the word *karate*, 'to injure somebody without arms, without weapons'.

When in those days there was a lot of strife in society, warfare and conflict, this was the technique adopted by Buddha to defend himself. It can be used as any *vidya*, knowledge, and it is neither good nor bad in itself. The application of that knowledge makes it either good or bad.

Our purpose is not to teach the children a martial art. The intention is to give them restraint, control, *sanyam* - over their body, their senses, mind, perceptions, over their responses and reactions. The intention is to help them be prompt, precise, sharp and alert. Therefore, karate is a practice of dynamic meditation, performed by the children of Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal.

– 9 September 2014, Paduka Darshan, Munger



Yoga Chakra – the Second Initiation



The Yoga Chakra course (1st to 7th November 2015) was by invitation only. One could apply but there was no guarantee of admission. That was the information I received and when I asked Swami Niranjana, I received the same answer; I was asked to apply with no guarantees. When I sat in the class the first day in the open air theatre called Satyam Vatika, I knew why.

For one, I was sitting with my father, Shri Prem Verma, and chacha, Shri Ashok Verma, and of course they had done a lot more yoga, meditation and sadhana than I could ever imagine doing. Also, the people I sat with always sat in VIP seats in the front of the crowds and they connected with Swamiji a lot more than I could do. They had years of yogasana under their belt and surely a lot more pratyahara, dharana and dhyana. Frankly, they were far superior in yoga, both in theory and practice.

Well, I was in, and in a class conducted by Swami Niranjana himself, a dream come true. Swamiji counting the counts of the yoga postures, Swamiji giving out the direction of the



meditation. Oh, it was the ultimate opportunity as yet at BSY for me. I was thrilled, I was excited, and I was flabbergasted. I was nervous, awed and inspired so much so that I began to falter even in the basics.

The days flew and merged into one another: the theory of yoga, the origin the present state, the future all in one single capsule – what was to be the future of yoga? How would it be taken ahead and who would take it? I took gulps and mouthfuls and yet couldn't take it in. As someone said about the class, Swamiji made the information bite size so that we could gulp, digest and assimilate it. Yet it overwhelmed us.

When we did the first meditation in class it was an absolute delight. Swamiji was in his element. He was on a roll. Like a juggernaut he just spilled it all around and we were to take it in as fast as we could. The asanas that Swamiji made us do were the simplest yet they were made so challenging I didn't believe I was forty years old at my peak!

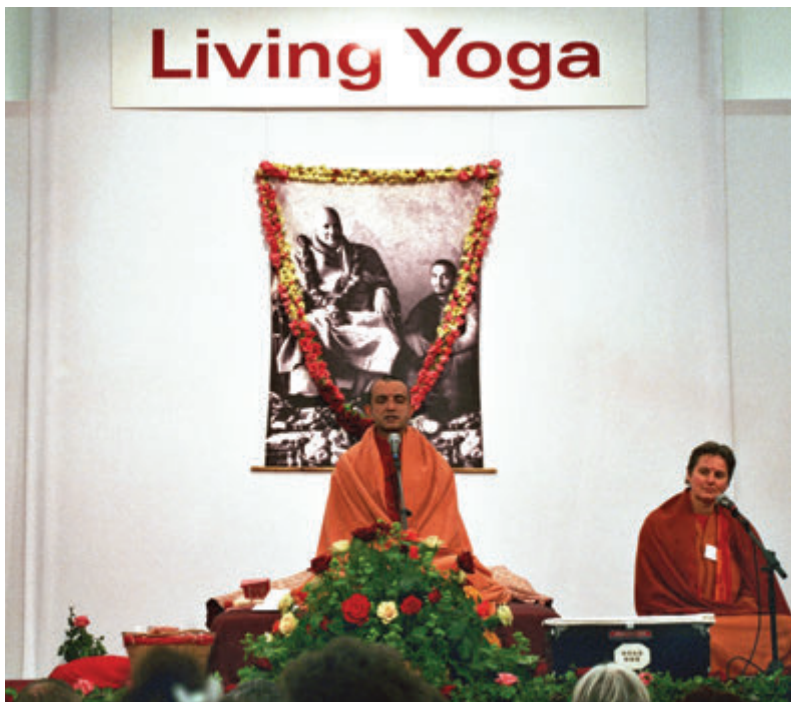
To top it up, I had my fortieth birthday in the middle of the course. It was the best gift I had ever received to be sitting at the feet of my guru on my fortieth and being initiated a second time.

When the course ended I was on a new high. I felt things were crystal clear. I had graduated from karma sannyasa and initiated into jnana yoga. Oh, it is really amazing being where I am and receiving the blessings of Swamiji. All I can say is "Cheers! I am high on Yoga!" *Hari Om.*

– *Vedgiri (Himalay Verma), Patna*

The Beginning of Spiritual Life

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



The whole idea of spiritual life is based on a pure, simple principle, given in the *Bhagavad Gita* (2:48): *Samatvam yoga uchyate* – “Evenness of mind is called yoga.” Yoga is the method for finding balance and equilibrium within oneself.

This equilibrium is the balance between the attainable and non-attainable, between the perfectible and what is not perfectible, between what gives happiness and what causes unhappiness. It is the balance between the two polarities of life. This is the first stepping stone into spiritual life.

This idea of balance does not end as long as there is life. Life is an expression of paradoxes from the time of birth to the time of death. Until the time of death, one has to find the strength to experience balance. One has to find the strength to work and live in a harmonious way. Living in a harmonious way means with awareness of body, health and illness, with awareness of mind and the pulls of the mind, and with the awareness of how to find harmony and peace. It is the discovery of this harmony and peace which constitutes the first foundation stone of spiritual life.

Need for effort

It has been said that yoga beings with asana or other techniques. It has been said that spiritual life begins with discipline. However, from the ideas and experiences of teachers and masters, real spiritual life is developed and experienced when one begins to take control over the fluctuating states of the body and mind and brings about balance in their expression.

One has to make the effort to find this harmony in thinking, behaviour, action, living, in the environment, at home and in one's profession.

The various practices and sadhana of yoga help, yet realization of spiritual life begins with balancing oneself. Whether as a beginner or an advanced student, one has to always try to find this harmony in action, in non-action, in pain and pleasure, in happiness and discomfort; this is the ultimate test of human spiritual effort.

– 28 April 2006, Ganga Darshan, Munger

The only thing you can do is learn from children. Try to smile like them, be tender like them, speak like them and be worry-free like them.

–Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yoga Publications Trust

On the Wings of the Swan

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

On the Wings of the Swan series consists of discourses and satsangs given by Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati at Ganga Darshan Vishwa Yogapeeth, Munger.

These teachings contain a wealth of wisdom applicable to all yogic aspirants seeking guidance and inspiration for living a harmonious life. A yogi from birth, Swami Niranjan's approach combines practicality, empathy, compassion, warmth, humour and penetrating insight.

Volumes V–VIII cover lectures given to students, residents and guest between 1998 and 2012. The topics covered are extensive and varied, addressing countless aspects of yoga, yogic lifestyle and spiritual life.



New

Yoga Publications Trust, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar 811 201, India
Tel: +91-06344-222430 , 06344-228603, 09304799615 • Fax: 91+6344+220169



A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be sent along with enquiries to ensure a response to your request

Satyananda Yoga Websites

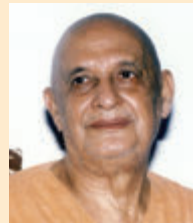


www.biharyoga.net

The official website of Bihar Yoga. Includes information on: Satyananda Yoga, Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati, Yoga Publications Trust catalogues.

www.rikhiapeeth.in

The Rikhiapeeth website is a sanctuary for all spiritual seekers so they can stay connected to the cardinal teachings of Swami Sivananda, 'Serve, Love, Give', that are practised and lived at Rikhiapeeth. Includes inspiring satsangs, information about Rikhiapeeth, upcoming events, courses and more.



Living Yoga with Swami Niranjan

www.biharyoga.net/living-yoga/. Dedicated to the vision and mission of Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, the spiritual successor of Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati, it contains news and articles.

www.yogamag.net

The official website of Yoga magazine contains an archive of over 30 years of the magazine. This archive is fully searchable and ever expanding.

Avahan Online

www.biharyoga.net/sannyasa-peeth/avahan/. Provides online access to *Satyaka Avahan*, the bi-monthly magazine of Sannyasa Peeth, which contains the higher teachings of Sri Swami Sivananda, Sri Swami Satyananda and Swami Niranjanananda, along with the programs of Sannyasa Peeth.



- Registered with the Department of Post, India
Under No. HR/FBD/297/16-18
Office of posting: BPC Faridabad
Date of posting: 1st-7th of every month
- Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers, India
Under No. BIHENG/2002/6305

issn 0972-5717

bar code

Yoga Peeth Events & Training 2016

Jan 1	Akhanda Path of 108 Hanuman Chalisa
Feb 2-May 29	Yogic Studies Course, 4 months (Hindi)
Feb 9-12	Sri Yantra Aradhana
Feb 13	Basant Panchami Celebrations/ Bihar School of Yoga Foundation Day
Feb 14	Bal Yoga Diwas, Children's Yoga Day
Feb 21-27	Yoga Capsule: Respiratory (Hindi)
Mar 20-Apr 3	Yoga Capsule: Total Health (Hindi)
Apr 24-30	Yoga Capsule: Digestive (Hindi)
Jul 15-18	Guru Poornima Satsang Program (Hindi/English)
Jul 19	Guru Paduka Poojan (Hindi/English)
Aug 1-30	Yoga Instructors Course (Hindi/English - for nationals)
Sep 24-30	* Hatha Yoga: Shatkarma Intensive (Hindi/English)
Oct 1-30	* Progressive Training for Satyananda Yoga Teachers (English)
Oct 3-Jan 29	* Yogic Studies Course, 4 months (English)
Oct 22-28	* Raja Yoga: Asana & Pranayama Intensive (Hindi/English)
Nov 5-11	* Kriya Yoga: Preparatory (Hindi/English)
Dec 19-23	Yoga Chakra Series III (Hindi/English)
Dec 25	Swami Satyananda's Birthday
Every Saturday	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
Every Ekadashi	Bhagavad Gita Path
Every Poornima	Sundarkand Path
Every 5th & 6th	Guru Bhakti Yoga
Every 12th	Akhanda Path of Ramacharitamanas

* Indicates courses available in English language for Overseas participants

Please be aware that mobile phones are NOT permitted in the ashram.
Ensure that you do not bring your mobile with you.

For more information on the above events contact:

Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar 811201, India
Tel: +91-06344-222430, 09304799615, 06344-228603, Fax: +91-06344-220169
Website: www.biharyoga.net

✉ A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be sent along with enquiries to ensure a response to your request